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ABSTRACT

To widen the concept of justificatory rhetoric (which has previously been considered as a presidential rhetorical form delivered in a context of foreign policy emergency) and to show some of its inherent hazards, this paper analyzes a 1978 address by Governor James Hunt of North Carolina, in which he justified his decision not to pardon the demonstrators known as the Wilmington Ten but instead to reduce some of their prison sentences. The paper begins by explaining the Wilmington Ten case and the circumstances that led to Hunt's decision to take executive action in it. It then outlines characteristics of justificatory rhetoric--it justifies an action already taken or in progress, it takes place in a context demanding immediate action, the crisis situation is removed in space from those asked to accept the justification, the action is based on little information and contemplation, and its themes are based on the themes of free world leadership and antagonism to Communism--and shows how Hunt's address represents a domestic version of the presidential justificatory form. Finally, the paper considers Hunt's purpose as expressed in the address, shows that his strategic approach was to defend the mechanism of government and the judiciary from outside attack, and assesses Hunt's strategy as one that steered toward the solution of the legitimation crisis in a self-serving way. (GT)

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JUSTIFICATORY RHETORIC AND INSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMATION

A CASE STUDY

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The case of the Wilmington Ten began as a minor firebombing incident in 1971 and grew into an international cause celebre by 1978. The wide attention drawn by the case was due to a number of factors; the intervention of the U.S. Justice Department in the case, the international spotlight generated by President Carter's human rights campaign, criticism in the Soviet press, and the inclusion of the Wilmington Ten on Amnesty International's list of worldwide prisoners of conscience.[1] In this atmosphere of criticism and controversy, Governor James Hunt of North Carolina issued an executive action on the case before a statewide TV audience on January 23, 1978. Rejecting the possibility of pardon, Hunt revealed his decision to reduce the sentences the defendants had received for their crimes. As a communication "undertaken in justification of actions already taken or in progress",[2] his address can most profitably be examined as a domestic case of justificatory rhetoric.

Heretofore, justificatory rhetoric has been examined and defined as a presidential rhetorical form delivered in a context of foreign policy emergency.[3] In this paper, I shall; 1)attempt to widen this concept by demonstrating Governor Hunt's address to be a domestic analog to presidential justificatory addresses in order to, 2)shed light on Hunt's strategic approach to the issues of the case, and 3)uncover through this some inherent hazards for the employment of the justificatory form. Since the Wilmington Ten case is known only by reputation to many, I will begin with a very brief history of the case, locating the main area of controversy.

Of the defendants in the case, eight were Wilmington high school students who led a protest over the treatment of black students in the newly integrated schools of that city.[4] The incident heated when, by day, a white power group staged counter-demonstrations and, by night, gunfire erupted in the black community between white vigilante patrols and community residents.

Of the remainig two defendants, one was Reverend Ben Chavis who was called in from the Raleigh office of the United Church of Christ's Commission on Racial Justice to help organize and lead the protest after violence broke out.[5] The other was Ann Shepard Turner, a white social worker who aided the protest leaders. These ten were accussed and convicted of burning a white-owned grocery store on the night of February 6, 1971 and shooting at the firemen and policemen who responded to the alarm.

In September 1972, largely on the basis of the testimony of three teenagers - Allan Hall, Jerome Mitchell, and Eric Junious - nine of the defendants were found guilty on two charges, burning with an incendiary device and conspiracy to assault emergency personnel. The sentences handed down were near the maximum stipulated for these crimes. The eight student defendants received various sentences ranging from 20-26 years for burning with an incendiary device (out of a range of 5-30 years), and 3-5 years for the conspiracy to assault charge (out of a range of 3-5 years) to be served concurrently with the sentence for firebombing. Ben Chavis received 25-29 years for firebombing, and a 4-5 year concurrent sentence on the conspiracy charge. Ann Ahepard Turner was found guilty of accesory before the fact to a crime and given a 7-10 year sentence. The case proceeded up the ladder of appeals until the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear it in January 1976.

In September 1976 Allan Hall, the chief eyewitness for the prosecution (Hall was the only witness claiming to be directly involved in the incident, Mitchell and Junious claimed to have overheard plans for the raid) filed a statement in Federal District Court as part of a defense motion calling for a new trial.[6] Hall stated that Jay Stroud, the prosecutor, had alternately threatened him with a long sentence for his role in the incident, and promised him special prisoner priveleges if he would implicate the defendants. This motion for a retrial hearing was granted and the court opened in May 1977. By this time Jerome Mitchell and Eric Junious joined the defense team in claiming that their earlier testimony had been false.[7]

The hearing took a wild turn during Jay Stroud's testimony. Explaining that Hall had been given "favored prisoner" status, not as a reward for testimony, but as a protection from reprisals by supporters of the Wilmington Ten among his fellow inmates, Stroud produced a tape of a telephone conversation he had with Hall a week earlier. On the tape, Hall admitted that his 1972 testimony was accurate but that he changed his story because of threats he had received from supporters of the defendants.[8] Four days later, defense attorney James Ferguson produced his own taped telephone conversation with Hall on which he claimed to have lied to Stroud on the phone.[9] Hall's motivation for issuing these conflicting statements was never made clear and his credibility suffered. Mitchell and Junious maintained their position that they had lied in 1972.

Ruling that he could find no violation of the constitutional rights of the defendants, Judge George Fountain denied the motion for retrial with no further explanation of the decision. It was at this time that

the case received its widespread notoriety and the U.S. Justice Department decided to investigate. When the State Court of Appeals upheld Judge Fountain 's ruling, the final avenue of judicial redress in the state's courts was closed and the Governor made his decision to take executive action.

Based on a formula that will be discussed later, Hunt reduced the minimum sentences of the defendants for the crime of firebombing. The sentences of the eight student defendants were reduced to 14 years and that of Ben Chavis to 17 years. Ann Shepard Turner's 7 year minimum was adjudged appropriate for her crime. At the time of the address, she had already been released on parole. Since a prisoner in North Carolina is eligible for parole after serving one-fourth of the minimum sentence, all of the defendants, except Ben Chavis, would be eligible by the end of 1978.

It was mentioned earlier that justificatory rhetoric has been defined as communication undertaken to justify an action already taken or in progress. Karen Rasmussen posited four additional characteristics of justificatory rhetoric; 1)that it take place in a context demanding immediate action, 2)that the crisis situation be removed relatively far in space from those asked to accept the justification, 3)that the action must be based on little information and contemplation, and 4)that the basic themes of the rhetoric be based on Truman's foreign policy themes which predicated America's mission of free world leadership and an antagonistic relationship to the Communist world.[10] With some modifications of these characteristics, we can demonstrate that Hunt's address represented a domestic version of the presidential (perhaps more

appropriately - executive) justificatory form.

At the most basic level of definition, the Governor's speech was designed to announce a decision already made. The address itself put that decision into operation and created a legal commitment to that action no less forceful than a presidential commitment of troops in a foreign policy emergency. In effect, the Governor had the power to act as the final court of appeal. Hunt neither argued for an adoption of policy (although it did contain a hint in that direction), nor was it primarily an apologia - a defense of self (although, there was a hint of this also). Primarily, it was communication pusuant to an accomplished action.

The first of Rasmussen's subsidiary characteristics was the context demanding immediate action - a crisis situation. Hunt spoke only 19 days after the final state court ruling, so he did act quickly. In his speech Hunt conveyed an atmospere of crisis without using that specific term. His opening words pointed to the controversy generated by the case and hinted at the result of this: "Thousands of you have written and called my office about it just in recent days. It's a matter that touches deep and conflicting feelings in many people".[11] This was given a more severe portrayal in the peroration of the address:

> It is time for all of us to turn away from the bitterness and rancor of the past. Because bitterness and anger and distrust of each other can tear us apart as a State and crush our hopes for the future. (emphases added)

Using the metaphors of "tear" and "crush", Hunt painted a picture frought with dire social consequences having far reaching implications for the harmony of daily life. The threat to harmonious order defined the severity of the crisis and provided the rationale for executive action.

The nature of the crisis was of a threat to the the image of the state's judicial authority. The pressures, both Federal and international, helped to create the atmosphere Hunt presented as ,at least, a mild state of crisis. Complicating the scene were images of other recent cases sullying the state's reputation with respect to its treatment of minorities, such as the case of the Charlotte Three (similar in nature to the Wilmington Ten), the Joanne Little case, and the problem of the integration of the University of North Carolina system.[12] In view of these pressures, the Governor faced a legitimation crisis, the essential issue being the continued ability of the legal system to claim efficacy in its function of meting out justice in an evenhanded manner. Legitimacy in democratic societies is based, in part, on the trust the governed credit to the government and its agencies.[13] The issue here, especially given the wider perspective, was of trust in the legal system. Indeed, the Governor recognized this. Gary Pearce, the Governor's press secretary who co-authored the speech, stated that one of the Governor's main objectives for the address was to "restore confidence in the judicial process."[14]

The second characteristic of justificatory rhetoric was that the situation be removed relatively far in space from those asked to accept the justification. Obviously, the situation could not be removed spatially, but it could be removed psychologically. In his conclusion, the call was made to"turn away from" the divisiveness of the issue and remove the case to the past. Even further, Hunt attempted to remove the case from its surroundings:

I would invite those who have criticized us to look at North Carolina.

> Look at our people. People working side by side for common goals... We haven't acheived perfect harmony. No one would claim that. There is much more we want to accomplish and we're moving ahead together toward a future that offers order and justice and opportunity for all of our people.

Here, Hunt pointed beyond the case and branded it as atypical, removing it from the essence of North Carolina. This transcendance had the effect of removing the case from the immediate psychological field of the audience. Combined with the tendency for most people to view the criminal justice system as far removed from their everyday affairs, the act might as well have taken place on foreign soil.

The third characteristic of this form specified action based on little information or contemplation. But for whom? In foreign policy emergencies the president is briefed by his intelligence network. He has information and weighs options that Congress may see only long after action has been taken. Hunt painstakingly enumerated his efforts to gather the information necessary to make his decision. He told his listeners of interviewing the lawyers and judges, reviewing transcripts, taking into consideration the tensions in Wilmington in 1971, and considering the defendants' ages and past records. Hunt, like any executive had information and options, but the point is it remained priveleged information. In his review of the history of the case, little was disclosed concerning the role his investigation played in his decision making process. Only the barest of outlines of the case history was presented. A good example is the portrayal of the crucial 1977 retrial hearings:

> Last year, the defendants took their case back to court to ask for a new trial on the basis of their allegations that three of the

> state's witnesses had lied at the trial, After a two week hearing on these allegations, the Superior Court found there was no basis for a new trial.

Not only did this brief summary provide little detail, but it also subtly distorted the image of the case by stating that the defendants had claimed the witnesses lied rather than stating that the witnesses themselves claimed they had lied. Technically, Hunt was correct. Once Hall, Mitchell, and Junious recanted their testimony, they had become defense witnesses. Rhetorically, it profoundly altered the nature of the case.

The Governor used his enumeration of efforts in investigating the case, not to disclose what he found, but to establish his superior position from which to view the case. In an appeal analogous to President Johnson's use of information in the Gulf of Tonkin crisis, Hunt relied on his image of authority and the credibility that could be drawn from that as a basis as a basis for the judgement affirming the actions the courts had taken.[15] In this way, Hunt fulfilled the intention of the third characteristic of justificatory rhetoric.

The fourth characteristic was based on Truman's foreign policy themes. Again, it is obvious that these do not fit domestic situations unless these themes can be cast in a more general form. The first theme, America's mission of free world leadership, can be rendered more abstractly as any transcendant purpose in the service of a value defined as central to the social structure. Truman's theme implied the fulfillment of a purpose that would provide the concrete embodiment of the central value of freedom. The same mechanism - linking purpose and action through a salient value - can be used in many rhetorical situations. The second

theme, an antagonistic relationship to Communism, can be removed from its specific referent and applied to rhetorical situations posing a systemic threat, no matter what the system is or by what it is threatened.

For the first of these themes, Hunt seemed to be little concerned with transcendant values. The over-arching values toward which action was directed were social order, justice, and harmonious progress. This aspect of purpose was dealt with briefly and seemed so de-emphasized because of the relationship of purpose and agency in his address, a point that will be discussed later.

The second theme, systemic threat, was more concretely present. Refering twice to"those who have criticized us", Hunt used the inclusive "us" to place political critics outside of the social system. Moreover, extremists of any stripe were placed in league with those vague and ominous critics of the state:

> That is my decision in the case. I doubt that it will satisfy those who opposed any action or those who demanded a pardon. But I did not make my decision to satify them, or to satisfy those from outside who have criticized North Carolina and our system of justice. I have made the decision I think is right.

The threat to the system was given embodiment in the unnamed "critics from outside, presumably (and one could fill in their favorite villian) the U.S. Justice Department, the Soviets, or New York Times and Washington Post journalists. The extremists within the state were akin to "fifth columnists" undermining harmony from inside the state's borders. Analogous to the theme of Communist aggression, the threat was a symbol around which to crystallize action.

Hunt's address, then, fit the characteristics of justificatory rhetoric quite well once domestic analogs were created. What light

might this characterization shed on the nature of this address and the rhetorical strategies employed by the Governor?

The decision was rendered in two major sections. First, the brief summary of the history of the case concluding with the rejection of the option of pardon based on the assessment that the courts had acted correctly. In the section section of the address, Hunt shifted the nature of the problem through a rather interesting and significant strategy of redefinition.

To begin, he mentioned a special message on legal reforms he delivered to the North Carolina General Assembly in January 1977. One of the reforms he mentioned at that time was that "prison sentences be made more uniform to eliminate the wide range of possible sentences for various crimes and the disparities that result from that". This offered a lever which Hunt used to alter the naure of the controversy. Hunt compared the two crimes with which the defendants had been charged with the range of penalties available for each to illustrate the disparities resulting from the lack of uniform sentencing policies. According to the Governor, the firebombing charge carried a "tremendous range" of 5-30 years in prison, the conspiracy to assault charge 3-5 years. Completing this comparison, Hunt stated: "I am frank to say to you that I consider shooting at firemen and policemen much more serious a crime than firebombing an unoccupied building".

With the stage thus set, the Governor reduced the sentences of the defendants while emphasizing that these reductions applied <u>only</u> to the charge of firebombing, <u>not</u> for the charge of conspiracy to assault. The point Hunt wished to make with this comparison of crimes

and punishments was that the "tremendous range" of 5-30 years seemed unfair since it was incongruent with the severity of the crime.

Hunt acted well within his constitutional power in performing this adjustment. What was interesting was his use of a suggested reform as a basis for action. This policy-making base allowed him to define the nature of the controversy as resulting from a purely technical flaw in the legal system:

> The lack of uniform laws and punishments that really fit the crime is what makes sentencing so difficult for our judges to administer and so hard for our people to understand. The one aspect of this case that was not subject to review in the appelate courts was the length of sentences. Our law does not permit any appelate court to review whether the sentences given in the case are proper and appropriate. The only place this can be addressed is right here, by the Governor, under the powers given to him by the constitution.

Defining his proper role as being what the courts could not legally do, Hunt acted as an adjunct to, rather than a usurper of, judicial powers. The blame for the controversy was placed on a technical blind spot in the legal system, precluding a scrutiny of specific behaviors of the legal process in the case.. If there were any injustice in the case, it was a function of the lack of a cohesive legal code rather than a human failure of fairness in the system.[16]

Now, I will return to a consideration of purpose as expressed in the address. Earlier, it was pointed out that transcendant values seemed to be a rather weak element in the address. Purpose seemed so de-emphasized because it was firmly bound to agency in various forms. Mechanism was central in each part of the address. In the first segment, it was the concern with affirming the correctness of procedures the courts had used in handing down its decisions. In the second section, it was the

redefinition of the problem as one resulting from a flaw in the legal machinery. Even Hunt's concern for the manner in which information was gathered to complete his personal investigation of the case pointed in this direction.

Many critics of Hunt's decision viewed his real purpose as a clear cut case of the compromise of principle to reap political capital.[17] The rhetorical signposts, however, point overwhelmingly to an action defending the mechanism of government from outside attack. Those who attributed political motives to the address missed the social-institutional motives that so clearly formed the basis of Hunt's approach. The nature of the situation was that of a legitimation crisis for the state's judicial system, touching issues of the trust and confidence that North Carolinians would be willing to invest in the system. Such a situation raises some questions about the inherent hazards of the justificatory form in a legitimation crisis.

The Governor never revealed the factual basis for his decision to uphold the procedures and decisions of the courts, nor was he under any obligation to do so. Because of the nature of the situation as a legitimation crisis, however, he could not entirely avoid a posture of defense. As much as his address was an executive decision, it was also a defense of the judiciary. Since he was, in essence , a final court of appeal, his address could also be considered a form of apologia. His role was, at least, quasi-judicial. Unlike apologia, there was no defense of self; quite the contrary, his powers as cheif executive allowed to use his personal and official image to assert that, since he had confidence in what the courts had done, so should his listeners.

Since no system is perfect, the Governor can step in to adjust imperfections and inequities if the reason for doing so is impelling enough. With his characterization of the controversy as a threat to harmony in the state, Hunt provided that reason. Once he portrayed the situation as a crisis, his quasi-judicial role involved him in an interesting paradox. Could he legitimately defend the actions of a system of which he was a part? To deny this proposition totally is to deny that government can ever regulate itself, a structural defect with chillingly sweeping implications. The use of a justificatory rhetorical mode in such a case will always present the hazard of becoming a self-serving method of rationalizing action rather than providing a satisfying rationale. The ends of state can be used to justify its means. On the other hand, if government is to act effectively, it must have the ability to act quickly and with enough latitude to correct social ills. The pattern of justification for those actions, however, must be caefully examined for signs of a self-serving rhetoric.

W. Lance Bennett wrote that the primary paradox of politics is that insatiable demands are brought to the public arena for satisfaction. Thus, "the essence of a political issue is that, as stated, it cannot be resolved".[18] Politics and rhetoric work hand in hand to recast the nature of conflict and give proposed solutions the "appearance of satisfactory outcomes".[19] This was precisely what Governor Hunt did. The suspicions of judicial "railroading" were converted to safer questions concerning the technical performance of the legal system amenable to governmental solution. A soluble problem, especially one for which the Governor had already proposed a solution to the legislature,

was a much more comforting perspective than the spectre of a malicious and capricious judiciary advanced by critics of the case. This strategy, of course, steered toward the solution of the legitimation crisis, but in a self-serving way. I will advance two reasons for that assessment.

First, Hunt presented no reason, beyond his expression of personal confidence, that the courts had proceeded and ruled correctly. His judgement was based on his investigation, but the results of that investigation were never revealed. He relied exclusively on that part of his official role that could stand outside of the legal system as a mediator to carry the full load of substantiation of his opinion. Given the nature of the situation as one public trust in the judicial process, the unadorned employment of the judicial decisions handed down in the case to justify themselves appears self-serving.

Second, the nature of the solution was such that the human dimensions of the problem were minimized to feature the availability of resolution through the existing machinery of the state. The redefinition, then, not only advanced the image of the state's capability to solve the problem; but, since the Governor's reforms were before the legislature, implied that the slight technical flaw at the heart of the problem was already well on the way to being solved.

It would appear that the Governor stepped a bit beyond the natural hazards of systemic defense at the core of the justificatory form to define the problem at a self-serving level. Self-serving is here used not at the personal political level (although Hunt would certainly score points in the electorate for finding a reasonable middle way in resolving the controversy), but at the level of the system of government. His agency-centered rhetoric was ultimately founded on trust in the institutions of

the state and his personal image of sincere goodwill and reasonable judgement. Even it it could be said to be politically effective, this pattern of justification can become a threat to critical evaluations of government by the governed.

The American people, even in these cynical times, want to feel that the judgement of their elected officials is worthy of trust.[20] In a legitimation crisis involving an issue of trust, a political rhetor must offer more than a request for trust on the part the audience in order to justify action. Governor Hunt asked for such an act of faith on the part of his listeners. It should be understood that this assessment is merely an extension of the inherent hazards of justificatory rhetoric used in a society that upholds the sometimes contradictory values of governmental honesty and openess on one hand; and expedient, effective action on the other.

Here, we must return to the question of whether or not government can justify its own actions. The answer must be both yes and no. In the case before us, Governor Hunt possessed some judicial powers and, therefore, was a part of the legal system under critical attack. In his executive capacity, he could also claim dissociation from the system and a dispassionate impartiality in reviewing the case. It was the latter role, of course, that Hunt emphasized in his address. The existence of the former role, however, loomed in the background. There is an analog here to the presidential role conflict of policy-making vs. policy implementation in foreign interventions. In both cases rhetorical efficacy is greatly dependent on public trust in the executive's authority to act in a given manner and in the appropriateness of that action. Since all

justificatory rhetoric contains a necessary element of defense, its employment in any situation will strain trust to some degree. At what point justification passes into a self-serving posture will be and should be a matter of critical debate. In this essay, that point was determined to be when trust is called upon to resolve an issue of trust.

The concept of justificatory rhetoric can be a useful tool with which to examine policy enactments by executives. It should be given a wider interpretation than that of a form of presidential rhetoric used in foreign policy emergencies. It may be applied to any rhetorical situation that announces action being taken. In the complex relationship between the executive, the political system, and the electorate lie some of the most intriguing questions involving rhetoric in the service of social and political power. Through the investigation of patterns of justificatory rhetoric, much about the symbolic bases of political action and legitimation can be learned.

FOOTNOTES

1. "60 Congressmen Make Plea for Wilmington Ten", New York Times, June 19, 1977, p.6. "Wilmington Ten Denied New Trial", New York Times, May 21, 1977, p.8. "Wilmington Ten Ruling Goes on TV Tomorrow", New York Times, January 22, 1978, p.20.

2. Karen Rasmussen, "An Interaction Analysis of Justificatory Rhetoric", Western Speech, 37(Spring 1973), p.111.

3. In addition to Rasmussen, see Richard Cherwitz, "Lyndon Johnson and the crisis of Tonkin : A President's Justification of War", Western Speech, 41(Spring 1978), p.93-104. Robert Ivie, "Presidential Motives for War", QJS, 60(October 1974), p.337-345.

4. "Youth Killed in Wilmington", Raleigh News and Observer, February 7, 1971, p.3.

5. "400 March on Building", Raleigh News and Observer, February 4, 1971, p.3.

6. "Witness Against Chavis Says He Lied", Raleigh News and Observer, October 12, 1976, p.19.

7. "Ten Witness Cites Prosecutor's Favors", Raleigh News and Observer, May 11, 1977, p.1.

8. "Witness Admits Lying For Ten", Raleigh News and Observer, May 17, 1977, p.1.

9. "In New Tape, Hall Denies '72 Trial Testimony", Raleigh News and Observer, May 20, 1977, p.6.

10. Rasmussen, p.111.

11. Manuscript of Governor Hunt's address, January 23, 1978. Copy supplied courtesy of the Governor's office. All subsequent excerpts from the address come from this manuscript.

12. "North Carolina Leaders Worried By Blemishes on State Record", New York Times, February 22, 1978, p.1. This article contains a good summary of problems of a racial nature faced by the North Carolina legal system in the seventies.

13. Claus Mueller, The Politics of Communication, (NY: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.127-129.

14. Interview with Gary Pearce, October 16, 1978. Tape in possession of the author. Pearce also indicated that the decision would be a "no win" situation - they did not see any way of satisfying extremes of opinion.

15. Cherwitz, p.100.

16. In my interview with Pearce, he intimated that the Governor felt that the 1972 trial judge had handed down long sentences on the firebombing charge because he "could't give them a long enough sentence on the

conspiracy charge, a process Hunt privately labeled "playing games" with the sentencing. No hint of this feeling, however, was displayed in the address.

17. "Hunt Harshly Criticized for Wilmington Ten Action", Washington Post, January 25, 1978, p.14. "Governor Hunt and the Wilmington Ten", editorial, Washington Post, January 25, 1978, p.20. William Raspberry, "The Wilmington Ten : Politics, Not Justice", Washington Post, January 25, 1978, p.21. "Supporters of Ten Vow to Continue Fight", New York Times, January 25, 1978, p.12. "Carolina Governor Shortens Terms for Wilmington Ten", New York Times, January 24, 1978, p.12. "North Carolina Reaction on Ten Varies", Raleigh News and Observer, January 24, 1978, p.1. "The Ethics of Ambition", Nation, February 4, 1978, p.100-101.

18. W. Lance Bennett, "Political Scenarios and the Nature of Politics" Philosophy and Rhetoric, 8(Winter 1975), p,27.

19. Bennett, p.28.

20. John Patton, "A Government as Good as its People : Jimmy Carter and the Restoration of Transcendence to Politics", QJS, 63(October 1977), p.249-257. Don Hahn and Ruth Gonchar, "Political Myth : Image and Issues", Today's Speech, 20(Summer 1972), p.57-65. Patton implied that Carter tapped a reservoir of this desire for a trustable candidate in 1976. Hahn and Gonchar contended that image campaigns serve a useful function by providing the electorate with a choice based on general qualities of leadership and judgement, rather than issues that will soon be dead. In this choice, voters invest trust in a candidate's ability to act reasonably and with good intent.